Storm Prediction Center Day 3-8 Fire Weather Outlook Guidance

NWS Product Description Document (PDD)

Part 1 - Mission Connection

The Storm Prediction Center (SPC) is the National Weather Service's center of expertise for national scale fire weather forecasts. The current SPC fire weather forecast product suite includes Outlooks for today (Day 1) and tomorrow (Day 2). The fire weather and emergency management community has expressed an interest in longer range outlooks to facilitate planning.

This Product Description Document concerns SPC issuance of Day 3-8 fire weather outlooks to provide national guidance on a critical public safety issue for media, emergency managers, local National Weather Service Forecast Offices and ultimately the United States public. This product will help its customers to adequately prepare several days in advance for the potential of significant fire weather conditions. This product enhancement is aligned with the NOAA Strategic Objective for FY2005-2010 to "Improve predictability of the onset, duration and impact of hazardous severe weather and water events" and its experimental initiation was part of the 2005 NWS Service Improvement Plan.

This product was previously available to only GOV internet addresses, to collect feedback on the content and value from Government customers and forecasters. We are now satisfied that the product is ready for a wider audience. During its period of GOV-only viewing, we have heard from several external customers who would like us to expedite broader availability of this enhanced severe weather service. During the recent extreme fire weather conditions in the Southern Plains we received the following request from the Austin Texas Emergency Manager:

Greetings,
Is there any chance I could get a copy of the experimental Fire WX outlooks for Sat-Sun (currently restricted to .gov domain)? I am trying to do some wildfire preplanning for the New Years weekend. Any assistance you could provide would be appreciated.
Thanks

Kenneth D. Neafcy, /Emergency Plans Officer/
City of Austin Office of Emergency Management

The information we subsequently provided this emergency manager received a positive response.

<u>Comments</u>

The SPC proposes to make the Day 3-8 Fire Weather Outlook open to all customers for comments through its web site *beginning on May 2, 2006 and ending on January 15, 2007* at which time a decision to proceed with testing, revise the test or to continue on the path to operational production will be made. Since the product would be in the public domain, this outlook can be repackaged and re-transmitted in accordance with standard NWS product use policies.

During the experimental period the format for the information will be unchanged from its previously NOAA-restricted form unless internal or external feedback results in product revision. Partners and users can access this product from the fire weather outlook section of the SPC website each day (http://www.spc.noaa.gov/products/exper/fire_wx/). Given continued success, the SPC plans to eventually convey this information in human and machine readable form within an operationally disseminated AWIPS product. An NWS Public Information Statement (PNS) Service Change Notification (SCN) will be issued prior to AWIPS product transmission.

Part II - Technical Description

The Day 3-8 Severe Weather Outlook product will consist of one graphic with an area(s) where a significant fire weather threat is anticipated during the period. The fire weather threat areas will be depicted with a closed line and a label indicating the dates of the expected threat. A short 2-4 sentence paragraph will accompany the graphic to briefly describe the area depicted and occasionally describe the key reasons for the forecast. The forecast decision will be based on a variety of guidance information including the GFS, UKMET and ECMWF deterministic models, Medium Range (MREF) ensemble guidance and other statistical techniques.

These extended range severe weather outlooks will provide SPC customers and partners with information that will help them provide better public safety for the United States public.